Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp comprising:

[[-]] a light-transmitting discharge vessel ~~(10)~~ having inner walls for enclosing, in a gastight manner, a discharge space ~~(11)~~ provided with a filling of mercury and a rare gas,

[[-]] the discharge vessel ~~(10)~~ comprising:

discharge means for maintaining a discharge in the discharge space~~; (13),~~

[[-]] a protective layer for covering at least a part of ~~an~~ the inner wall ~~(12)~~ of the discharge vessel; and ~~(10) being provided with a protective layer (16),~~

[[-]] ~~the discharge vessel (10) being provided with~~ a luminescent layer ~~(17) comprising~~ covering the protective layer and having a luminescent material~~,~~

[[-]] ~~the luminescent layer (17) further comprising~~ and inorganic softening particles ~~(27)~~ with a softening point above

450°C,

[[-]] ~~the~~ wherein a size of the softening particles ~~(27) being~~ is in ~~the~~ a range from 0.01 to 10 μm.

2. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the softening particles ~~(27) comprise:~~

[[-]] are selected from at least one of a borate, ~~and/or~~ a phosphate of an alkaline earth metal, ~~and/or~~

[[-]] ~~a borate and/or~~ and a phosphate of at least one of scandium, lanthanum, yttrium ~~or~~ and a further rare earth metal.

3. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 2, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the softening particles comprise a phosphate of an alkaline earth metal and wherein the alkaline earth metal is selected from one of calcium, strontium, and ~~and/or~~ barium.

4. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 2, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the softening particles comprise a phosphate of a further rare earth

metal and wherein the further rare earth metal is selected from at least one of lanthanum, cerium, and ~~and/or~~ gadolinium.

5. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the softening particles ~~(27)~~ are selected from ~~the group formed by~~ at least one of strontium borate, barium borate, yttrium borate, yttrium-strontium borate and calcium pyrophosphate.

6. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the size of the softening particles ~~(27)~~ is in the range from 0.01 to 1 μm.

7. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the ~~inorganic~~ softening particles ~~(27)~~ have a melting point above 600 °C.

8. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the protective layer ~~(16)~~ comprises yttrium oxide or aluminum oxide.

9. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the protective layer ~~(16)~~ comprises:

[[-]] at least one of a borate, ~~and/or~~ a phosphate of an alkaline earth metal, ~~and/or~~

[[-]] ~~a borate and/or~~ a phosphate of scandium, yttrium ~~or~~ and a further rare earth metal.

10. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim ~~8~~ 9, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the protective layer comprises a phosphate of an alkaline earth metal and wherein the alkaline earth metal is selected from at least one of calcium, strontium, and ~~and/or~~ barium.

11. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim ~~8~~ 9, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the protective layer comprises a phosphate of scandium or yttrium and a further rare earth metal and wherein the further rare earth metal is selected from at least one of lanthanum, cerium, and ~~and/or~~ gadolinium.

12. (Currently amended) ~~A compact fluorescent lamp comprising a~~ The low-pressure mercury-vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ further comprising:

a lamp housing ~~(70) is~~ attached to the discharge vessel; and

~~(10) of the low-pressure mercury-vapor discharge lamp, which lamp housing is provided with~~

a lamp cap ~~(71)~~ attached to the lamp housing.

13. (New) The low-pressure mercury-vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the luminescent layer comprises a phosphor suspension and wherein the softening particles are added to the phosphor suspension in 0.1 wt.% with respect to a solid content of the luminescent layer.

14. (New) The low-pressure mercury-vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the luminescent layer comprises a phosphor suspension and wherein the softening particles are added to the phosphor suspension in 0.5 wt.% with respect to a solid content of the luminescent layer.

15. (New) The low-pressure mercury-vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the luminescent layer comprises a phosphor suspension and wherein the softening particles are added to the phosphor suspension in 1.0 wt.% with respect to a solid content of the luminescent layer.

16. (New) The low-pressure mercury-vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the luminescent layer comprises a phosphor suspension and wherein the softening particles are added to the phosphor suspension in 2.0 wt.% with respect to a solid content of the luminescent layer.

17. (New) The low-pressure mercury-vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the discharge vessel comprises at least one arc-shaped portion joined to at least one straight portion.